QA Guide: Correcting Occupational Misclassification: "Maintenance Worker" vs. "Janitorial Worker"

A Follow-Up Guide for Intake and Life Plan Accuracy in IDD Support Services

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Purpose of This Guide

This guide addresses a recurring error found in Life Plans and Intake employment documentation for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD): the use of the term **"Maintenance Worker"** when the individual is performing or being prepared to perform **janitorial work**.

This mislabeling contradicts the **Standard Occupational Classification (SOC)** system, which is used for workforce tracking and service planning nationwide. Repeated mistakes of this nature may result in documentation errors, funding misalignment, and misleading employment support strategies.

Table 1: SOC Comparison – Janitorial vs. Maintenance Worker (SOC 2018)

SOC Code	Occupation	Definition
37-2011	**Janitors and Cleaners**	Keep buildings clean and orderly. Duties include cleaning floors, disposing of trash, sanitizing surfaces, and general upkeep of offices and public spaces.
49-9071	**Maintenance and Repair Workers**	Perform skilled work related to equipment and facility repairs such as plumbing, carpentry, and mechanical tasks requiring tools and trade knowledge.

Table 2: Consequences of Misclassification

Area Affected	Impact
Life Plan Documentation	Can distort the individual's employment goals and needed supports.
Employment Records	Employers may use the wrong job code or SOC classification.
Funding and Oversight	Inaccurate reports may affect Medicaid/state funding alignment.
Support Planning	Job coaching may not reflect actual workplace duties.

How to Get It Right

- **Ask about actual tasks:** Is the person cleaning offices, restrooms, hallways, or public areas? Are they using mops, brooms, and vacuums?
- **Review job offer letters and HR codes:** Confirm internal job codes like **200298 – Vacation Relief Porter**, which fall under **janitorial functions**.
- **Use SOC 37-2011** whenever duties involve routine cleaning and upkeep in a building, office, or public space.
- **Avoid SOC 49-9071** unless the individual is performing skilled trade work like repairs, plumbing, or machinery servicing.

Annex 1: Sample Correction Letter – Life Plan Documentation

Dear [Care Manager's Name],

I hope you're doing well. I'm writing to clarify the occupation listed in [Client's First Name]'s Life Plan. It is currently stated as "Maintenance Worker." However, based on the job responsibilities — cleaning office and public spaces, using cleaning tools and equipment — the correct occupation should be **"Janitor and Cleaner" (SOC Code 37-2011).**

This distinction ensures accurate planning, documentation, and alignment with the federal SOC system. I've attached the SOC comparison for your reference.

Warm regards,
[Your Name]
VR Job Coach

Annex 2: Sample Correction Letter – HR/Employer Record

Dear [HR Contact's Name],

I'd like to clarify the occupation listed for Dwayne Langston. In his resume and prior documents, the occupation is written as "Maintenance Worker," but the job code **200298 – Vacation Relief Porter** and his actual duties (cleaning offices, using janitorial equipment) align with **"Janitor and Cleaner" (SOC 37-2011).**

To ensure internal records and reporting are accurate, I recommend using the correct SOC-defined occupation. The comparison table is attached for reference.

Sincerely,
[Your Name]
VR Job Coach

Annex 3: Reference

For further clarification on using the SOC system in intake and service planning, please refer to:
"What is the SOC – A Guide for Intake and DSP Service Planning"
Available on both the **AMSI** and **Committee for Standardization SharePoint** sites.